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SOLICITATION DE-PS07-00ID13964

Steel Visions of the Future

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AGENCY: Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office.

ACTION: Solicitation for Financial Assistance: DE-PS07-00ID13964, Steel Visions of the Future Solicitation.

SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Idaho Operations Office (ID) is seeking applications for cost-shared research and development of technologies which will reduce energy consumption, enhance economic competitiveness, and reduce environmental impacts of the Steel Industry. The research is to address research priorities identified by the Steel Industry in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*. Approximately \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000 in federal funds is expected to be available to fund the first year of selected research efforts. DOE anticipates making 2 to 5 cooperative agreement awards each with a duration of five years or less. Collaborations between industry, university, and National Laboratory participants are encouraged. The cooperative agreements will be awarded in accordance with DOE Financial Assistance regulations, Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter II Subchapter H, Part 600 (10 CFR 600). Award of a cooperative agreement under this solicitation does not commit the Government to fund any follow-on research. Successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly, annual, and final reports to DOE.

Project performance periods are divided into budget periods. The performance period for the first budget period is anticipated to be 12 months. DOE may issue a continuation award (e.g., the second budget period), if the awardee demonstrates a continuing need for federal assistance; shows sufficient progress in the research effort; has completed the objectives in compliance with a mutually agreed upon management plan; has submitted timely and informative reports; and identifies the objectives planned for the new budget period.

Multi-partner collaborations between industry, university, and National Laboratory participants are encouraged. A minimum of three steel producing companies must be involved in each project and each steel producer must provide at least 5% of the cost share. Involvement of more than three steel producing companies is encouraged. The Steel Manufacturers Association (SMA) has offered to try to identify mini-mill producers and suppliers as partners for interested applicants. Contact should be made to Eric Stuart, Steel Manufacturers Association, 1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, Suite 907, Washington, DC 20036-3101, (202) 296-1515, (e-mail: stuart@steelnet.org).

COST SHARE

Cost share may be provided as cash or as in-kind cost share. Cost share may not be other federal funding. Reference 10 CFR 600.123 and 10 CFR 600.127.

Fifty per cent (50%) minimum non-federal cost-share is required for research and development projects. **This solicitation is requiring 50% cost share to ensure industrial involvement in each of the proposals and to ensure that the novel, energy efficient processes developed by this R&D program will be fully implemented by industry. There will be no waivers of this cost share requirement.** First year cost share can be as low as 30% if subsequent years have sufficient cost share so that the non-federal share of the total project is at least 50%. **No fee or profit** will be paid to cooperative agreement award recipients.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

For-profit, non-profit, state and local governments, Indian Tribes, and institutions of higher education may submit applications in response to this solicitation. Multi-partner collaborations between industry, university, and National Laboratory participants are encouraged. Industrial partners must be included, either as primary applicants or as cost sharing partners. A minimum of three steel producing companies must be involved in each project and each steel producer must provide at least 5% of the cost share. Involvement of more than three steel producing companies is encouraged.

National laboratories will not be eligible for an award under this solicitation. However, an application that includes performance of a portion of the work by a National Laboratory may be considered for award provided the applicant clearly identifies the unique capabilities, facilities and/or expertise the Laboratory offers the primary applicant. National Laboratories will receive their funding through their existing arrangements with the Government via Field Work Proposals (FWP).

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for this program is the Federal Non-Nuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-577).

CFDA NUMBER

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number for this program is 81.086, *Conservation Research and Development*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CONTACT:

Questions shall be submitted to Ms. Carol Van Lente, contract specialist, by facsimile at 208-526-5548, e-mail: <mailto:vanlenc1@id.doe.gov>, or by telephone at (208) 526-1534 no later than July 31, 2000. Answers to the questions will be posted to the DOE-ID PSD Current Solicitations Website by August 15, 2000 as an amendment to this solicitation. The contracting officer for this solicitation is Dallas Hoffer.

APPLICATIONS

The application face sheet is the Standard Form (SF) 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*. The application is to be prepared for the complete project period. A separate application shall be prepared for each project (i.e., do not combine two or more projects in one application).

Technical applications cannot exceed a maximum of 20 pages excluding the required SF 424 form.

See Section I through Section V of this solicitation for technical requirements. Section VI identifies the types of supporting documentation that will be required from applicants whose technical proposals are selected for negotiation and award. Applicants are not required to submit Section VI information unless they are notified by DOE to do so.

Applications must be submitted on standard 8-1/2" x 11" letter size paper. Margins on all four sides must not be smaller than 1"; font size must not be smaller than 11 point Arial or equivalent. The front and back sides of a single sheet are counted as 2 pages.

APPLICATION DUE DATES

The Standard Form 424, and the technical application (20 page maximum), must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. MST on Thursday, September 14, 2000. The Standard Form 424 and the technical application must be prepared in one volume and must be submitted as one original (original signatures) and ten copies, for a total of 11 sets of the proposal. Each proposal set shall be marked as "Original," "Copy 1," etc. **Any application received after applications are forwarded for merit review will not be evaluated.**

The application supplemental documentation, discussed in Section VI of this solicitation, must be submitted within **30 calendar days after selection notification**. Selections are expected to be made on or about November 15, 2000. Applicants who fail to cooperate fully and in a timely manner during negotiations may be eliminated from further consideration for awards.

SUBMITTAL ADDRESS

Applications must be submitted to:

Procurement Services Division
U. S. DOE, Idaho Operations Office
Attention: Carol Van Lente [DE-PS07-00ID13964]
850 Energy Drive, MS 1221
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401-1563.

Caution: Applicants assume full responsibility for insuring that the application is received at the specified place by the specified time and date and with the specified number of copies. Procurement Services Division personnel are not responsible for reproducing copies. Procurement Services Division personnel will not pick up packages delivered to the local airport. Neither email nor facsimile (fax) applications will be accepted.

PROJECTED SOLICITATION MILESTONES

Applications will be evaluated immediately after the technical application due date deadline. Any applications received after applications are forwarded for merit review will not be evaluated. Merit review and selection activities are expected to be completed approximately two months after the technical application deadline. Award activities are expected to be completed approximately four months after selection. This timeframe includes time for submission by selected applicants of the non-technical, application supplemental documentation. Incomplete or inadequately supported applications will delay or negate awards. Unsuccessful applications will not be returned.

Section I: Supplementary Information

A. Background

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) through its Office of Industrial Technologies (OIT) supports industries in their efforts to increase energy efficiency, reduce waste and increase productivity. The goal of OIT is to accelerate the development and use of advanced energy efficient, renewable, and pollution prevention technologies that benefit industry, the environment, and U.S. energy security. OIT's core program is the Industries of the Future Program which focuses on basic materials and processing industries such as the Steel Industry. This solicitation seeks applications for research and development projects that address the priorities identified in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*. The applications are for a specific type of financial assistance agreement called cooperative agreements.

B. Project Description

In May 1995, the Steel Industry and the Secretary of Energy signed a Compact pledging to work together through research and development partnerships. This Compact was renewed and resigned in February 1999. The objective of this solicitation is to support this pledge by funding research, development and demonstration projects which address the priorities identified in the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*.

Proposals must address one of the research needs in Chapters 2, 3, or 4 of the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*. Applicants must cite the relevant passage from the *Roadmap* that justifies the proposed effort and explain how the project will meet these research needs.

Projects must have the potential to achieve significant national energy savings when commercialized in the U.S. Steel Industry.

NOTE: The DOE Office of Industrial Technologies does not fund product development R&D (priorities identified in Chapter 5 of the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*). Topics in any of the above mentioned documents will be funded only if the proposed research and development addresses energy efficiencies in Steel manufacturing, not in the end-use application.

SECTION II: Technical Application Requirements

Each application must contain the following information and must use the following format:

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Describe the proposed program and why it is appropriate for domestic industry and the relationship to the objectives of the solicitation.
- 1.2 Provide an organizational Plan (Identify all project participants. Discuss the role of each participant.). A minimum of three steel producing companies must provide at least 5% cost share each. Involvement of more than three steel producing companies is encouraged. The Steel Manufacturers Association (SMA) has offered to try to identify mini-mill producers and suppliers as

partners for interested applicants. Contact should be made to Eric Stuart, Steel Manufacturers Association, 1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, Suite 907, Washington, DC 20036-3101, (202) 296-1515, (e-mail: stuart@steelnet.org).

- 1.3 List specialized experience of the applicant.
 - 1.4 Provide total costs and non-federal cost-share commitments (itemize the financial commitment of each participant).
 - 1.5 Provide a nonproprietary summary of the proposed project including project benefits suitable for public release (maximum of two paragraphs).
 - 1.6 Identify by citation the specific *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap* research need(s) addressed by the proposal and explain how this research effort will meet that need.
- 2.0 CRITICAL REVIEW OF TECHNOLOGY STATUS
- 2.1 Describe Domestic Technology Status including Emerging Technologies.
 - 2.2 Describe Worldwide Technology Status including Emerging Technologies.
 - 2.3 Explain why domestic industry is not already investigating or implementing the proposed concept and why they will not conduct the R&D without government assistance.
- 3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION
- 3.1 Provide a one to two page summary that includes how industry will participate in the proposed R&D.
 - 3.2 Describe how the concept addresses the research need(s) cited by the *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap*.
 - 3.3 Discuss the technical feasibility and targets of the concept.
 - 3.4 Identify the hurdles to be overcome by the proposed R&D.
 - 3.5 Provide the assumptions and detailed calculations of economic benefit to the overall domestic Steel Industry. Economic benefits to the Steel Industry must be reviewed by at least two of the participating steel companies, to insure that the estimates are consistent with current steel operating practices.
 - 3.6 Provide the assumptions and detailed calculations of energy savings (list energy savings in BTUs). Energy savings must be reviewed by at least two of the participating steel companies, to insure that the estimates are consistent with current steel operating practices.
 - 3.7 Provide the assumptions and detailed calculations of environmental benefits of the proposed R&D (include details on reductions of greenhouse gas

emissions). Environmental benefits must be reviewed by at least two of the participating steel companies, to insure that the estimates are consistent with current steel operating practices.

4.0 PROJECT PLAN

- 4.1 Describe the project goals and scope.
- 4.2 Provide a statement of goals and objectives.
- 4.3 Provide a work breakdown structure.
- 4.4 Provide a milestone plan and schedule.
- 4.5 Identify and describe technical targets, decision points, and go/no-go decision criteria.
- 4.6 Provide a spending plan by task, phase, and year.
- 4.7 Provide sources of, and expectations concerning cost share and financing.
- 4.8 Commercialization path - Identify the path that will be used by the project team to transfer the technology to industry. Describe how the technology will be made available to a wide cross-section of the Steel Industry at the earliest practicable time. Include current and potential partnering strategies, follow-on development phases, licensing strategies and a discussion of potential barriers and how the barriers will be overcome.

5.0 TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

- 5.1 Provide brief resumes for key personnel and describe their responsibilities.
- 5.2 Describe related experience.
- 5.3 Describe relevant facilities and equipment that will be available for use on this project.
- 5.4 Provide justification for and description of needed facilities and estimated costs.
- 5.5 National Laboratory Capabilities - Include a description of the unique capabilities to be used at the National Laboratory. Unique capabilities are defined as those not available in the private sector.

6.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 6.1 Describe project organization and individual responsibilities.
- 6.2 Describe how tasks will be integrated and the project will be coordinated.

- 6.3 Describe the project management structure including implementation and monitoring of R&D.
- 6.4 Discuss the management philosophy for achieving project success.

SECTION III: Application Evaluation

A. Merit Reviews

All applications will be evaluated under the procedures for "Objective Merit Review of Discretionary Financial Assistance Applications," which was published in the Federal Register on May 19, 1998 (Vol. 63, No. 96).

Applicants may be requested to make a short overview/question and answer presentation to the merit review committee before the committee makes their final recommendation of which proposals should be supported to the Selection Official. Presentations can be done in person or by video or teleconference.

B. Selection Criteria

Only those applications which meet all of the requirements of this solicitation will be considered for selection. Selections will be made in accordance with the following selection criteria and programmatic considerations. All applications will be evaluated and point-scored in accordance with the following criteria. The applications must be fully responsive to each of the criteria.

Criterion 1 (30 points): Energy Benefits - Benefits will be evaluated considering the potential for the proposed technology to contribute to the reduction of the manufacturing energy consumption of the domestic Steel Industry.

Criterion 2 (30 points): Industrial Involvement – Industrial involvement will be evaluated considering: a) participation by the Steel Industry, and/or supplier industries in preparation of the application and in performing the research activities; and b) in identification of, and commitment to, a viable mechanism, plan, or path to transfer the technology to industry at the earliest practicable time.

Criterion 3 (15 points): Research Concept and Plan - The technical potential of the proposal will be evaluated considering: a) the responsiveness of the proposal to research priorities identified in the Steel Roadmap; b) the clarity, completeness, and adequacy of the statement of objectives (including a review of supporting data obtained in laboratory and/or pilot scale work completed to date); c) the technical merit and feasibility of the proposed work (i.e., is it based on sound scientific/engineering principles and on an understanding of current state of the art in the Steel Industry); and d) the adequacy and appropriateness of the schedule (sequence of project tasks, planned levels of data acquisition, sampling and analyses, principal milestones, decision points, and time for each task) and the planned assignment of responsibilities and level of manpower to complete the research.

Criterion 4 (15 points): Economic and Environmental Benefits - Benefits will be evaluated considering the a) general applicability, timeliness, economic viability of the proposed technology (i.e., probability of commercial application), and the potential for enhancing the economic competitiveness of the domestic Steel Industry; and b) potential for reducing the manufacturing environmental impacts of the domestic Steel Industry and/or their suppliers.

Criterion 5 (10 points): Applicant/Team Capabilities and Facilities - Capabilities and facilities will be evaluated considering: a) ability to assemble a multi-disciplined team with research experience and qualifications in the proposal subject area; b) knowledge of past advanced developments in the work proposed; c) the availability of equipment, laboratory and demonstration facilities, analytic support and other necessary resources for performing the work proposed; and d) project management methods.

C. Weighting of Criteria

The criteria will be based on a maximum of 100 points. The evaluation criteria are weighted as indicated above.

D. Programmatic Selection Considerations

In conjunction with the evaluation results and rankings of individual applications, the Government will make selections for negotiations and planned awards using the following programmatic considerations.

1) A balanced portfolio of R&D projects (i.e., diverse technologies, applications that benefit diverse segments of the Steel Industry, complimentary efforts, short duration vs. long duration projects, short-term and long-term market penetration horizons, geographic distribution, etc.).

2) Application's relevance to OIT's programmatic objectives, including achieving energy savings of at least 25% from its R&D investments, reducing negative environmental impacts – particularly greenhouse gas emissions and maximizing the number of excellent projects funded.

SECTION IV: General Conditions

A. Non-governmental Reviewers

In conducting this evaluation, the Government may utilize assistance and advice from non-Government personnel. Applicants are therefore requested to state on the cover sheet

of the applications if they do not consent to an evaluation by such non-Government personnel. The applicants are further advised that DOE may be unable to give full consideration to an application submitted without such consent. DOE reserves the right to support, or not to support, all, or any part of any application.

B. Application Preparation Costs

DOE is under no obligation, and will not pay, for any costs associated with preparation or submission of applications.

C. Partial Awards

DOE reserves the right to support, or not to support, all, or any part of any application. Unsuccessful applications will not be returned. Unsuccessful applicants may request a debriefing from the Merit Review Chairman.

D. Proprietary Application Information

Applications submitted in response to this solicitation may contain trade secrets and/or privileged or confidential commercial or financial information which the applicant does not want used or disclosed for any purpose other than evaluation of the application. The use and disclosure of such data may be restricted, provided the applicant marks the cover sheet of the application with the following legend and specifies the pages of the application which are to be restricted in accordance with the conditions of the legend:

"The data contained in pages ____ of this application have been submitted in confidence and contain trade secrets or proprietary information, and such data shall be used or disclosed only for evaluation purposes, provided that if this applicant receives an award as a result of or in connection with the submission of this application, DOE shall have the right to use or disclose the data herein to the extent provided in the award. This restriction does not limit the government's right to use or disclose data obtained without restriction from any source, including the applicant."

Further, to protect such data, each page containing such data must be specifically identified and marked, including each line or paragraph containing the data to be protected with a legend similar to the following:

"Use or disclosure of the data set forth above is subject to the restriction on the cover page of this application."

It should be noted, however, that data bearing the aforementioned legend may be subject to release under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), if DOE or a court determines that the material so marked is not exempt under the FOIA. The Government assumes no liability for disclosure or use of unmarked data and may use or disclose such data for any purpose. Applicants are hereby notified that DOE intends to make all applications submitted available to non-Government personnel for the sole purpose of assisting the DOE in its evaluation of the applications. These individuals will be required to protect the confidentiality of any specifically identified information obtained as a result of their participation in the evaluation.

SECTION V: Notices to Applicants

A. False Statements

Applications must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this solicitation. The penalty for making false statements is prescribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

B. Application Clarification

DOE reserves the right to require applications to be clarified or supplemented to the extent considered necessary either through additional written submissions or oral presentations.

C. Amendments

Any amendments to this solicitation will be posted on the DOE-ID PSD Current Solicitations Website. Only the Contracting Officer may amend this solicitation. Any data, information, or instructions coming from any other source are not official.

D. Commitment of Public Funds

The Contracting Officer is the only individual who can legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds in connection with the proposed award. Any other commitment, either explicit or implied, is invalid.

E. Assurances and Certifications

DOE requires the submission of pre-award assurances of compliance and certifications, which are mandated by law or regulations. These submissions shall be completed and provided when requested by the contract specialist.

F. Pre-award Costs

The government is not liable for any costs incurred in preparation of an application. Awardees may incur pre-award costs up to ninety (90) days prior to the effective date of award. Specific, written authorization from the Contracting Officer is required before pre-award costs are incurred if the authorization is needed for more than 90 calendar days or if the project is a non-research project. Should the awardee take such action, it is done so at the awardee's risk and does not impose any obligation on the DOE to issue an award (10 CFR 600.125). Pre-award cost authorizations will not be made retroactively.

G. Patents, Data, and Copyrights

Applicants are advised that patents, data, and copyrights will be treated in accordance with 10 CFR 600.27.

H. Environmental Impact

DOE requires the submission of an applicant environmental checklist before award. Award will not be made until any and all environmental requirements are completed. This submission shall be completed when requested.

I. EPACT

Applicants who are classified as a business entity, other than an institution of higher education or an organization of the type described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, will be required to comply with Section 2306 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT) [42 U.S.C. 13525], as applicable and as described in Financial Assistance letter number 96-02 issued on August 01, 1996. This Financial Assistance letter requires DOE to determine: (1) if the applicant's participation in the program will be in the economic interest of the United States and, (2) if the applicant is a United States owned company.

J. DOE Minority Economic Impact Loan

DOE Minority Economic Impact loans are not available for this solicitation.

K. Buy American Act

NOTICE REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF AMERICAN-MADE EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTS -- SENSE OF CONGRESS

It is the sense of the Congress that, to the greatest extent practicable, all equipment and products purchased with funds made available under this award shall be American-made.

COMPLIANCE WITH BUY AMERICAN ACT

In accepting this award, the recipient agrees to comply with sections 2 through 4 of the Act of March 3, 1933 (41 U.S.C. 10a - 10c, popularly known as the "Buy American Act"). The recipient shall review the provisions of the Act to ensure that expenditures made under this award are in accordance with it.

L. Simpson-Craig Amendment

Applicant organizations which are described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and engage in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, will not be eligible for the receipt of federal funds constituting an award, grant, or loan.

M. Lobbying Restriction

The recipient agrees that none of the funds obligated on this award shall be made available for any activity or the publication or distribution of literature that in any way tends to promote public support or opposition to any legislative proposal on which Congressional action is not complete. This restriction is in addition to those prescribed else where in statute and regulation.

N. Terms and Conditions Applicable to Awards

Awardees will be required to comply with the standard terms and conditions listed at the DOE-ID PSD Current Solicitations website.

SECTION VI: Supplemental Documentation

A. Who Must Submit Supplemental Documentation

If an applicant is selected for an award under this solicitation, the applicant **MUST** furnish the supplemental documentation identified in this section. All of the supplemental documentation must be furnished within 30 calendar days after the applicant receives notification of selection for negotiations and award. Failure to furnish the supplemental documentation will result in delays or may negate the selection.

Supplemental documentation will include pre-award certifications, cost information, benefits analysis data and an environmental checklist.

URL ADDRESSES FOR DOCUMENTS & FORMS REFERENCED IN THIS SOLICITATION

1. *Steel Industry Technology Roadmap* - <http://www.steel.org/mt/roadmap/roadmap.htm>
2. DOE-ID PSD Current Solicitations Website - <http://www.id.doe.gov/doeid/psd/proc-div.html>
– Click on “Current Solicitations and Sources Sought,” located on the lefthand side of the screen.
3. Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance* - <http://www.id.doe.gov/doeid/psd/proc-div.html> - Click on "Federal Assistance Application and Administration Forms," located on the lefthand side of the screen, and then scroll down.
4. Terms and Conditions Applicable to Awards - <http://www.id.doe.gov/doeid/psd/proc-div.html> - Click on "Federal Assistance Application and Administration Forms," located on the lefthand side of the screen, and then scroll down.
5. 10 CFR 600, *Assistance Regulations* - <http://www.pr.doe.gov/f600toc.html>
6. Financial Assistance Letter 96-02 - <http://www.pr.doe.gov/fals.html>
7. Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 10a - 10c) - <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/41/ch1.html>

(End of solicitation)